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GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER SCHOOL MOUNTS INTENSE DRAMA IN MAY

In **Cannibals**, a new play written and directed by King Morrison and scheduled for performances in May at Newark's George Washington Carver School, reading and arithmetic are replaced by mayhem and violence when teenaged drug dealers break into a school and terrorize a teacher and two students.

An elementary school auditorium sets the stage for this gripping drama which stars members of Carver's drama club and two of the school's alumni. Ben, a naive Catholic high school student, played by Hersheal Jones, unwittingly involves himself with three local hoods and agrees to sell drugs to his classmates to earn money to buy a moped. Ben's younger brother, Ronnie, played by Donald McFadden, finds the drugs and disposes of them.

Three young vengeful drug dealers enter the school after-hours on a mission to recover their merchandise. The sociopathic Mustafah (Al Tariq Hollins), delights in inflicting pain and instilling fear and holds the teacher (Morrison) and Ben hostage while young Ronnie goes off to supposedly recover the drugs.

"Webster's dictionary says that cannibals are those who dine on human flesh. Then to me, drug dealers are modern day cannibals who feed off the misery of other humans," says

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- DRAMA AT GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER SCHOOL (cont'd)

playwright Morrison. Morrison, a graduate of Rutgers University, entered the Newark school system through the State's Alternate Route program. Bringing with him an extensive background in theatre, he has added a new dimension to Carver's theatrical and cultural environment.

"As a teacher I've observed how young people today are so easily led astray," Morrison says. "What has happened to society? What is lacking in the home that makes young people reach out to anybody, even drug dealers, for family? Through the characters Preacherman (Terry Stephens) and Choo Choo (Antwan Fouche) who play Mustafah's cohorts, I'm not only targeting the kids but the parents and other responsible adults, who through constant abuse or sheer negligence, force their children to seek love and guidance from a pimp, a leader of a car-theft ring or, as in **Cannibals**, a drug dealer."

Morrison says he wrote the play after a former student was tragically killed. The incident left him so scarred that he wanted to send a message to parents and their children. "For those parents who do all they can to show their children love and guidance, and still find themselves with troubled children, I want them to know, I hurt with them, I support them, I applaud them."

Public performances of **Cannibals** will take place on May 10 and 11 at 7:00 pm at George Washington Carver School, 333 Clinton Place in Newark. Admission is \$1 and proceeds will go to the Drama Guild. For additional information call (201) 705-3800.